

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 5707

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, OEXC, PFOR, PL

SUBJECT: VISIT OF POLISH MINISTER BARCIKOWSKI

REF STATE 196897

1. IN GOING TO THE US ON SEPTEMBER 20, POLISH AGRICULTURE MINISTER BARCIKOWSKI WILL BE INAUGURATING A NEW SERIES OF CABINET LEVEL CONTACTS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES FOLLOWING THE VISITS AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF OCTOBER 1974 AND JULY 1975. THE POLES WILL BE EVALUATING BARCIKOWSKI'S RECEPTION BY OFFICIAL WASHINGTON, AND THE RESULTS OF HIS VISIT NOT ONLY IN BILATERAL TRADE GROWTH TERMS, BUT ALSO AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS IN GENERAL AND AS A MEASURE OF THE DEGREE OF SUPPORT AND SYMPATHY FIRST SECRETARY GIEREK'S POLICIES, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC, COMMAND IN THE UNITED STATES.

2. BARCIKOWSKI HOLDS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AND SENSITIVE PORTFOLIOS IN GIEREK'S BOLD ECONOMIC GAMBLE. THE QUESTION OF INCREASING FOOD PRODUCTION HAS BEEN A CRUCIAL ISSUE SINCE THE FIRST SECRETARY TOOK POWER IN 1970. AT THAT TIME, BARCIKOWSKI, WHO HAD BEEN PARTY FIRST SECRETARY OF A HEAVILY AGRICULTURAL AREA (POZNAN), WAS BROUGHT INTO THE SECRETARIAT BY GIEREK, PRIMARILY TO DEAL WITH AGRICULTURAL MATTERS. AN AGRICULTURAL ENGINEER WITH A DOCTORATE IN ECONOMICS, BARCIKOWSKI IS REGARDED AS AN ABLE EXECUTIVE WHO ENJOYS GIEREK'S FULL CONFIDENCE. WHEN SHIFTED TO THE AGRICULTURAL

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PORTFOLIO IN FEBRUARY 1974, HE WAS REPLACED ON THE SECRETARIAT

BUT RETAINED HIS POSITION AS POLITBIURO CANDIDATE MEMBER.
HE WAS REPORTEDLY SWITCHED TO THE AGRICULTURE SLOT TO OVERSEE
PREPARATIONS FOR THE AMBITIOUS FOOD PRODUCTION PROGRAM ANNOUNCED
IN OCTOBER 1974, THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF WHICH WILL
BE A MAJOR FACTOR IN THE NEXT FIVE-YEAR PLAN TO BE MAPPED OUT
AT THE PARTY CONGRESS LATE THIS YEAR.

3. IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, WE RECOMMEND THAT EVERY
ATTEMPT BE MADE TO ARRANGE A SHORT MEETING BETWEEN THE

SECRETARY AND BARCIKOWSKI ON SEPTEMBER 22. FOLLOWING
THIS ESSENTIALLY PROTOCOLARY MEETING (BUT HAVING OVERTONES
EXPRESSING THE DEGREE OF OUR INTEREST IN POLAND), PERHAPS
UNDERSECRETARY ROBINSON COULD RECEIVE BARCIKOWSKI FOR MORE
SPECIFIC DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF BILATERAL AGRICULTURAL
TRADE, NOW ACKNOWLEDGED BY BOTH SIDES TO BE TRADITIONAL, AND
OF CONTINUING IMPORTANCE. IN SO DOING, THE UNDERSECRETARY
WOULD BE HELPING TO SET THE STAGE FOR THE FIFTH SESSION OF
THE U.S.-POLISH JOINT TRADE COMMISSION, WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE
IN WARSAW, OCTOBER 6-8.
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